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# PERISCOPE

## A Poor After-Action Report for U.S. Arms

Although preliminary reports indicated that U.S. military technology overpowered Soviet arms during Israel's invasion of Lebanon, the lessons now emerging from detailed study of the fighting contain some bad marks for American systems. Israel lost numerous armored personnel carriers during the early stages of the war—most of them U.S.-made M-113s—suggesting that no armored vehicle smaller than a tank can long survive on the modern battlefield. Nevertheless, the U.S. Army is about to begin production of the Bradley Infantry Fighting Vehicle (at \$1.9 million each), whose higher silhouette may make it an even more vulnerable target than the M-113—despite its heavier armor. America's new M1 tank may already be outdated. According to Pentagon consultant Edward Luttwak, Israel's M-111 antitank shell was able to slice through the heavy frontal armor of Syria's Soviet-made T-72 tanks from the astonishing distance of 3,500 yards. The antitank guns on the M1 must be within 900 yards to pierce T-72 armor.

In addition, Israel made extremely effective use of miniature unmanned aircraft as decoys in taking out 19 SAM missile batteries without the loss of a single attack plane (PERISCOPE, July 5). The Pentagon dropped such weapons from its arsenal after the Vietnam War; one is now under development, but will not be ready until 1986. In a dispute with Washington, Israel has withheld much of its battle data. But before he returned to Israel from Washington, newly designated Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Arens agreed in principle with Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger to work out an arrangement for sharing the intelligence.

## Puzzling Fragments of the Papal Plot

The investigation into the shooting of Pope John Paul II continues to yield intriguing bits of information.

■ According to British and American intelligence officials familiar with the operations of the Bulgarian security services, the Rome-based Bulgarians who have been linked to papal assailant Mehmet Ali Agca held cover jobs that are normally assigned to members of the military intelligence service (RO) and not the DS, Bulgaria's equivalent of the KGB. On an assignment as sensitive as an attack on the pope, the Soviets would almost certainly have worked through the DS rather than the RO, which is far more independent of KGB influence, or recruited its agents independently.

■ A U.S. Embassy official in Rome told Sen. Alfonse D'Amato that the Italian defense minister was mistaken when he charged that there had been an increase in radio traffic between Sofia and the Bulgarian Air Lines office in Rome just after the shooting. Modern cipher systems constantly transmit random numbers to frustrate efforts at detecting rises and falls in traffic.